

Remarks

This Amendment and Reply responds to the Office Action mailed March 3, 2006.

Claims 16-20 and 25-39 were pending in the application. Claim 34 is hereby canceled while claims 16, 27, 28, 29, 32, 35, and 39 are amended. No new matter is added by the amendments. Thus, claims 16-20, and 25-33, and 35-39 are now pending for reconsideration.

Applicants thank the Examiner for approving the drawings filed on October 09, 2001. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks.

Summary of the Office Action

In the Office Action, claims 16-20 and 25-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. Claims 32-35 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Claims 16, 17, and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of Kravette, McCracken, Hepworth, and Stephens. Claims 18-20, 25, and 27-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of Kravette, McCracken, Hepworth, Stephens, and Biffle. Claims 18-20, 25, and 27-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of Kravette, McCracken, Hepworth, Stephens, and Biffle. Claim 26 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of Kravette, McCracken, Hepworth, Stephens, Biffle, and Ladewski. Claims 36 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of Kravette, Stephens, Godsey, and McCracken.

Response to the 112(1) Rejection

The examiner rejected claims 16-20 and 25-39 as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Regarding independent claims 16, 32, and 36, the examiner requested the applicants to provide support for the computer controller, personal computer, interface and chip, and functional limitations between them.

In response, no new matter was added by the amendment to independent claims 16, 32, and 36 on 12/01/2005, which was fully supported in the specification.

The present copier monitoring system is capable [Page 5, lines 28-32] of automatically monitoring a plurality of copier machines [Fig. 1: 2], located at various locations from a central location or data collection point [4]. A translator [6], used to provide a uniform interface [Page 5, lines 34-35], is a microcomputer with specialized hardware and software [Page 6, lines 2-5].

A communication means [52] transmits current copier status information [Page 6, lines 10-16] from the translator [6] to the data collection computer [16]. The present system links remote copiers to a central data collection point [Page 6, lines 17-18]. The copier control computer [10] directly controls the status indicators by turning them on or off as needed [Page 7, lines 2-4]. To extract the copier status information, a data tap is installed within the copier [Page 8, lines 18-20]. The data collection computer [16] can be an IBM compatible personal computer [Page 23, lines 27-30], supporting the recitation of a “personal computer.”

First, the item described as a “computer controller” in claim 32, and by the examiner, is also recited as a – control computer – in claim 16. As depicted in Figure 2, the copier control computer box [10] is encompassed within the larger copier [2] block. Thus, the same limitations applied to claim 16’s control computer and claim 32’s computer controller are used with the copier in claim 36.

Second, the data collection computer [16] is a personal computer. As depicted in Figure 1, it is designated as a MAC computer, a type of personal computer used at the time of the invention. Claim 32 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 34, further describing the location of the personal computer relative to the copiers.

Third, the chip of claim 16, the interface of claim 32, and the network of claim 36 all describe the same element, a means for connecting the personal computer to the copier’s control means. As depicted in Figure 15, the copier control computer [10] is directly coupled to a plurality of lines, carrying information such as serial data, in/out

control signals, and miscellaneous control signals. Other combinations of signals may be used, as shown in Figure 16.

Regarding the term “chip,” the single CPU based translator system is displayed in Figs. 7 and 8 [Page 9, lines 24-25]. Within this translator, coupling the copiers to the personal computer, a 6809 microprocessor chip [Page 9, lines 27-28] acts as the central processing unit [22]. Thus, the chip is coupled to the interface / network, providing the function of sending signals to and from the copiers.

Response to the 112(2) Rejection

The examiner rejected claims 32-35 and 39 as indefinite. Regarding independent claim 32, the examiner alleged that there was insufficient antecedent basis for the computer controller, asking whether the remote computer was the same as the personal computer.

In response, claim 32 has been amended to recite a “personal computer from a remote location,” thereby clarifying the identity of this element. Thus, the limitations of now-canceled dependent claim 34 have been incorporated into independent claim 32. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Response to the 103(a) Rejections

In response to the Office Action, claims 16, 32 and 36 respectively recite that the control computer, computer controller, or copier element is configured (1) to receive a copier control command from the personal computer, which monitors the copiers, and (2) to transmit to the personal computer copier status information in response to a request (i.e., polling) for status information received from the personal computer. None of the references of record disclose these additional limitations.

Moreover, during a telephone conversation with examiner King Y. Poon on 07/27/2006, certain limitations from independent claim 32 were indicated to be allowable over the references of record. After correction of the 112(2) issue, these limitations have been incorporated into independent claims 16 and 36. Thus, all independent claims should now be allowable.

Claims 17-20, and 25-31, 33, 35, and 37-39 are dependent claims, so they all include the limitations now present in the three independent claims. Because independent claims 16, 32, and 36 recite elements that are neither disclosed nor suggested in any one or combination of the cited references, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now allowable and request withdrawal of the rejections of all pending claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

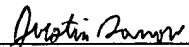
Conclusion

In view of the above amendment and remarks, applicants respectfully request that all rejections be withdrawn and that a notice of allowance be forthcoming. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney for applicants at 202-912-2160 for any reason related to the advancement of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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